

放生

Liberating Life

摘錄宣化上人講述之《妙法蓮華經淺釋·法師品第十》

Excerpted from the Venerable Master Hua's commentary on *Chapter 10, Masters of the Dharma, The Dharma Flower Sutra*



——插畫選自《羅漢》

——Illustration from *The Arhats*

我們不殺生，這是修慈悲心；我們放生，這也是修慈悲心。這就是要我們這慈悲心一天比一天大起來，大得像觀音菩薩大慈大悲的心那麼大。觀音菩薩就是放生、不殺生，所以他有大大慈大悲的心；我們也想學觀音菩薩這大大慈大悲的心，所以我們就要放生。這是按照現在這種邏輯

學來講，你放生，就會增加你的慈悲心。

又者，放生也就是「放我」；因為我和眾生是一體的，眾生也就是我、我也就是眾生。好像我自己若被人圈到籠子裏，你說是不是很不舒服？沒有自由了，很不高興，希望被人放開。自己被人圈到監獄裏，也不願意在那裏頭住，所以我不願意到監獄裏頭去，我也不願眾生在籠子裏頭。因為我和眾生彼此有

By liberating living beings, we also nurture compassion in our hearts. By not killing, we cultivate compassion. In letting living creatures go, we also cultivate compassion. The compassion in our hearts grows greater every day until it becomes as great as that of the greatly compassionate Bodhisattva Observer of the World's Sounds (Avalokitesvara).

Bodhisattva Observer of the World's Sounds did not kill living beings; he always liberated them, and so he has a greatly compassionate heart. We should imitate the great kindness and compassion of Bodhisattva Observer of the World's Sounds and liberate living beings. The principle is very logical: if you liberate life, you increase your compassion.

Liberating living beings is just liberating ourselves. Why? Because we and all living beings are basically of one substance. We should think this way: "If someone put me in a cage, wouldn't I be uncomfortable? Wouldn't I wish that someone would let me go?" If I were put in jail, I would not want to stay there. Likewise, I don't like to see birds put in cages. This is because living beings and I are of one substance. Since I feel this way, I want to liberate living beings.

What is more, you don't know which living being was related to you in a past life. One might have been your father, or your brother, or your sister. You can't know for

一種「同體」的感覺，所以要放生。這又是一個講法。

又者，這個眾生，你不知道牠在前生和我有什麼關係？或者我的父親、母親也不一定，或者我的兄弟姊妹，或者我的子女，或者我的朋友也不一定。我沒有得到天眼通、沒有證得宿命通，不知道這種前因後果的關係；現在我看見這些畜生沒有自由，我心裏就很不安樂，所以要放生。這個放生，有人對我講，是 very stupid things! (很笨的!) 這不是stupid，這也就是修行的一部份。修行，不是只一條路修行成功的，八萬四千法門，門門都是成無上道的路；放生，這也是其中之一……所以切記，不要說這是一個愚癡的行為。你有這種心理，對你自己修道上，是會有障礙的。

方才我說我們不會願意自己被人關到籠子裏頭、關到監獄裏頭去。這個說的是比喻，現在我給你們說一個真實的法；這不是比喻，這是真的。你自己這個身體，就是個籠子，你在你這個身體裏頭，始終都跑不出去。好像「煖、頂、忍、世第一」，你始終也沒有到頂位上、也沒有到這個忍位上、也到不了世第一，等你到「世第一」了，那就是出去這個籠子了，那是你自己放自己的生，那是「真放生」。你要是想得到那個「放生」，就要先「放這個生」；你「放這個生」，就會增加「你那個生」，也就是你那個「生」也就會長大了。

所以放生佛法裏，是佔很重要的地位，不過你自己沒有得到這種的滋味、沒有領悟到這種的道理，你認為它是很普通的。你想要得到你自己的放生，就得要先修這個放生；你不修這個放生，就得不到那個放生。這是生生不已，化化無窮的道理，你不要把這個放生看得小了。你這兒做了一點，那地方就增加了很多；修道，就是自己要去修行的。❀

sure. Perhaps they were your children, or your friends. Right now you haven't gained the use of the Heavenly Eye or the Penetration of Past Lives, and so you don't know what kinds of causes and effects belong to each animal; and yet, when you see these creatures, you feel uncomfortable and want to set them free. Setting them free isn't a stupid thing to do by any means, as some people might think. It is an aspect of cultivation. There isn't just one way to cultivate. There are eighty-four thousand Dharma-doors in cultivation, and every single door leads to the realization of supreme enlightenment. Liberating living beings is one of them..... We must be careful not to think of it as "stupid". If we have that kind of attitude, we will obstruct our own cultivation.

I just said that we wouldn't want to be locked in jail. I will tell you the truth. This is not an analogy. Your own body is, in fact, a cage! You are stuck in your own body and you are not yet able to get out of it. Until we have gained a very high level of spiritual practice and wisdom, we will remain stuck in the cages that are our bodies. Only then will we have liberated our own lives. That's the real liberation of the living. If we want to liberate our own lives, we must first liberate the lives of those little creatures. The one kind of liberating the living helps the other kind.

Liberating living beings is a very important aspect of Buddhist practice. But if one hasn't understood this yet, one might think it a very ordinary affair. If we don't cultivate the one kind of liberating the living, we won't be able to obtain the other kind. This is the principle of continuous production and infinite changes, and so don't look upon liberating the living lightly. Doing only a little bit here will result in a lot of increase there; to practice the Way, you yourself have to walk the path. ❀